

1 WE CLAIM:

2 1. A method for updating a master copy of a geographic database
3 comprising:

4 obtaining satellite images of areas based upon reports about errors in data that
5 represent geographic features located in said areas; and
6 determining from the satellite images appropriate changes to make to the master
7 copy of the geographic database to correct said errors in said data that represent said
8 geographic features.

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10 2. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

11 prior to the step of obtaining, grouping reports about errors that relate to the same
12 geographic feature.

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14 3. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

15 prior to the step of obtaining, grouping reports about errors that relate to the same
16 geographic feature so that only one satellite image needs to be obtained to determine the
17 appropriate change to make to the master copy of the geographic database with respect to
18 the data that represent that geographic feature.

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20 4. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

21 prior to the step of obtaining, grouping reports about errors that relate to
22 geographic features that are located close to each other so that only one satellite image
23 needs to be obtained to determine the appropriate changes to make to the master copy of
24 the geographic database with respect to the data that represent those geographic features.

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26 5. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:

27 assigning a higher priority to reports about errors that relate to the same
28 geographic feature.

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1 6. A method of updating a master copy of a geographic database comprising:
2 obtaining a report relating a geographic location;
3 obtaining a satellite image of the geographic location;
4 analyzing the satellite image to determine how to update the master copy of the
5 geographic database; and
6 updating the master copy of the geographic database.

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8 7. The method of Claim 6 wherein the satellite image is obtained by ordering
9 from a commercial satellite image provider.

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11 8. The method of Claim 6 further comprising the step of:
12 prior to obtaining the satellite image, confirming that a current satellite image is
13 not available in a satellite image archive; and then ordering the satellite image from a
14 commercial satellite image provider.

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16 9. The method of Claim 6 wherein the satellite image has at least
17 approximately 1 meter accuracy.

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19 10. The method of Claim 6 further comprising the step of:
20 after the step of obtaining the satellite image, displaying the satellite image at a
21 workstation of a geographic database developer.

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23 11. The method of Claim 10 further comprising:
24 indicating a position on the satellite image being displayed wherein the position
25 corresponds to the reported geographic location.

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27 12. The method of Claim 6 further comprising:
28 indicating latitude and longitude coordinates corresponding to a position of a
29 movable cursor.

1 13. The method of Claim 6 further comprising:
2 while displaying the satellite image at a workstation of a geographic database
3 researcher, displaying geographic features represented by data contained in the master
4 copy of the geographic database at a workstation indicating a position on the satellite
5 image being displayed wherein the position corresponds to the reported geographic
6 location.

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8 14. The method of Claim 13 further comprising:
9 overlays the geographic features represented by the data contained in the master
10 copy of the geographic database over the satellite image being displayed at the
11 workstation.

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13 15. The method of Claim 13 further comprising:
14 displaying the geographic features represented by the data contained in the master
15 copy of the geographic database and the satellite image side-by-side on the workstation.

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17 16. The method of Claim 10 further comprising:
18 while displaying the satellite image at a workstation of a geographic database
19 developer, displaying the report submitted by an end user including explanatory text
20 provided therewith.

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22 17. The method of Claim 6 further comprising:
23 providing an on-line program accessible to the end users; and
24 with the on-line program, allowing the end user to submit the report.

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26 18. The method of Claim 6 wherein said satellite image is obtained from an
27 archive.

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1 19. The method of Claim 18 further comprising:
2 prior to analyzing said satellite image, confirming that said satellite image was
3 taken recently enough depending on a type of updating to be made to said master copy of
4 said geographic database.

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6 20. The method of Claim 6 wherein the satellite image is obtained from a
7 central server of a geographic database developer.

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9 21. The method of Claim 6 further comprising:
10 defining a grid that overlays a geographic coverage area corresponding to said
11 geographic database, wherein said satellite image corresponds to a cell of said grid.

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13 22. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to roadway geometry.

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15 23. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to a placement of a
16 roadway divider.

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18 24. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to a number of roadway
19 lanes.

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21 25. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to roadway lane widths.

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23 26. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to roadway direction
24 restrictions.

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26 27. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to a turn restriction
27 along a road.

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29 28. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to whether a road is
30 paved.

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29. The method of Claim 6 wherein the report relates to a lake, river, park, or
recreational area.

